(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI KRISHNAM RAJU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A total of 54 fighter planes crashed during the last three years.

(c) The documents of Courts of Inquiry are confidential and can not be made public. However, causes of the accidents are made public in each case, once the inquiry is finalised.

(d) No, sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Recruitment in Defence Organisations in Jabalpur

†520. SHRI P. K. MAHESHWARI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a provision has been made for new recruitment in defence organisations located at Jabalpur;

(b) if so, whether the recruitment would be made a lower level also; and

(c) if not, the reasons for the recruitments being made in other defence organisations?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Agreement for software licences without tender

521. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Karodon rupayaon ke software ghotale se raksha mantralya mein tehelka" appearing in the Navbharat Times dated 5th May, 2001.

(b) if so, Government's views and reaction thereto;

(c) whether Government accepted an agreement with Armies Soft

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(Account-2001) for getting 3000 software licences without offering tender; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) The Army HQ had entered into an agreement with M/s Armies Soft for 300 Unit Accounts Software Packages in March, 2001 after following the prescribed procurement procedure.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Fire in Mamoon Cantonment Ammunition Dump at Pathankot

522. DR. KARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a big fire with a series of hundreds of blasts engulfed the Mamoon Cantonment Ammunition Dump at Pathankot, on 29th April, 2001;

(b) if so, the loss of lives, if any, and the damage caused thereby;

(c) the cause of the fire; and

(d) the number of such fires in Cantonments, Ordnance Factories and Ammunition Dumps during 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and the current year, so far, indicating the details thereof, and the steps taken to prevent such fires in future?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (d) An incident of fire occurred at 2 Ammunition Sub Depot (18 Field Ammunition Depot), Mamoon (Pathankot) on 29.4.2001. There was no loss of life. Loss of ammunition has been assessed as Rs. 27.69 crores (approximate). In the absence of sufficient proof, the Court of Inquiry has not been able to conclusively establish the cause of fire.

The details of fire incidents which have occurred in Ordnance/ Ammunition Depots of the Army during the period 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 till date are as under:—

(i) Ammunition Depot, Bharatpur (28th April, 2000)

(ii) Ammunition Depot, Dehu Road (3rd May, 2000)